

THE COMMONWEAL

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Cooperation or Compulsion.....	435	Canada's Four Generations...Henry Somerville	444
Week by Week.....	436	Thoughts on a School...Cortlandt Van Winkle	445
Silver.....Gerhard Hirschfeld	439	Seven Days' Survey.....	447
The Battle for Decency...Joseph H. McMahon	441	Communications	450
Goldenrod (<i>verse</i>).....Elizabeth Jane Astley	443	Books	William Franklin Sands,
		Ambrose Farley, Joseph Lewis French	452

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COOPERATION OR COMPULSION

AS WE go to press the chief founders of the American Liberty League are meeting in New York for the purpose of considering plans for extending the new organization to every state in the Union. According to the press reports, the leaders of the Liberty League are "Democrats and Republicans of national prominence," whose purposes are "to fight radicalism and uphold the Constitution." Among the incorporators are such well-known men as Alfred E. Smith and John W. Davis, both of whom have been presidential candidates of the Democratic party; and Nathan L. Miller, former Republican Governor of New York, and James W. Wadsworth, former Republican Senator from New York, and often mentioned as a probable contender for the presidential nomination of the Republican party in 1936. Associated with these eminent political leaders are many business leaders "who are," it is announced, "dissatisfied with some features of the New Deal." So far, the specific points of the Liberty League's program have not been announced, and until they are it will hardly be possible to form a definite judgment upon the place

which the League will occupy in the great political and social crisis now upon us all.

The country will eagerly await this definite promulgation of the Liberty League's policy. Meanwhile, there are certain considerations aroused by its formation which already deserve most thoughtful study, and which indicate the depth, and the complexity, of the currents of political, economic and social change which are sweeping throughout the people. First of all, it is highly significant that eminent leaders of the two great historic parties should now become allies, and the question at once arises whether this alliance does not presage a split in both the parties, and the formation of new parties representing frankly "conservative" and "liberal" realignments. This may be a premature speculation, yet even if the new organization keeps strictly within the limits of educational publicity, its main tendency will be to arouse and lead discussion which will inevitably strengthen the movements now working to bring about fundamental changes in our political life.

From this point of view, the new league—the

A. L. L., which may be nicknamed "Al's League," if the redoubtable Alfred E. Smith takes its main leadership—deserves a hearty welcome. It cannot fail to contribute very notably to that frank, free, searching examination of and debate upon political issues which are of the essence of a democratic form of government, and which the United States must sustain, at peril of losing its very soul if it does not do so. In the present state of the world, it is either compulsion or cooperation which must be chosen to hold together the threatened fabric of many nations—perhaps all of them—and the United States forms no exception to this general social law. The deepest problems of society are involved in the present crisis. We are hearing now in America the war cries which have resounded for generations in Europe, the slogans of a tremendous battle which already has transformed great countries, like Russia and Germany and Italy, and which is being desperately waged in Spain, and France, and Great Britain.

Among these catchwords and slogans are those which are now being heard in the talk about the Liberty League—such words as "radicalism," and "moving to the Right," or "moving to the Left." Yet how many of us really attach definite meanings to such phrases? When, for example, we speak about Right and Left wings, in politics or economics, what are our concepts of "the center"—the standard by which we determine the movements to the Right or to the Left. And "radical" and "radicalism"—to some minds these terms denote nothing but some vague, emotional image of Bolshevism, or Russian Communism. It is to be hoped that the Liberty League will show the nation a great example of thoughtful, not merely emotional, debate. For there is a compulsion which is exercised by emotional pressure, and what we need is not compulsion of any sort, but rather the cooperation of like-minded groups, fairly and honestly contending among themselves, and for the support of the public, using reason, not mere emotion, as their instrument.

The use of reason, based on principles and not mere passion, is the method being used by still another new organization, which is not likely to attract the newspaper fame, or notoriety, of political organizations, but which may well exert a deeper and healthier influence. We refer to the National Committee on Religion and Welfare Recovery, a movement "for strengthening and undergirding the moral and spiritual forces of the nation." Catholics, Protestants and Jews, including several bishops of the Catholic Church, and many ecclesiastical and lay leaders of all the religious bodies of the country, are united in this crusade of cooperation. The "call and program" issued by this committee is a notable event, the consequences of which, of course, will depend entirely upon the extent to which the call is heeded

by the church members of the country, and the program carried out in action. "The world is passing through one of the greatest changes in history. There is a growing conviction that the great scientific, economic and social development of the times may prove of doubtful permanent value unless there can be commensurate strengthening and undergirding of the moral and spiritual resources of the nation." And Pope Pius XI is quoted—among many Protestant and Jewish religious leaders—saying that, "unless such a renewal takes place, all our efforts will be futile and our social order will be proved to have been built on shifting sand, not upon enduring foundations."

None of the several hundred members of the committee officially represent, or can commit, their different organizations. The movement is strictly voluntary, a free-will cooperation. Already, however, many items of the suggested program have been agreed upon, and will be carried out. "Loyalty Sunday," October 7, has been chosen for a nation-wide rallying point of the new movement. An effort will be made to reach as many of the churches and synagogues of the country as possible and to have them unite—each within the limits of their particular form of religion—in a common demonstration of cooperation in arousing their own congregations first of all, and after that the general public, to the importance of the movement. We shall return, in these columns, to a further discussion of some of the highly important points of the suggested program. Meanwhile, we heartily commend the general purposes and guiding spirit of this cooperative adventure. Those of our readers who desire to inform themselves concerning the work of this organization are advised to write to Religion and Welfare Recovery, Lincoln Building, 60 East 42nd Street, New York, for full information.

WEEK BY WEEK

A SLIGHT growth of cheeriness in the business outlook during the past week gave rise to hopes that seasonal improvement to be expected in the fall might be somewhat better than average. Trouble is to be expected, however, from the necessary adjustment of rising food costs to domestic and relief budgets. Prices and wages have on the whole advanced insufficiently to meet a sudden unparalleled swing upward in the charge for grains and meats. As these remarks were being written, President Roosevelt had just gone to Hyde Park in order to map out a federal relief plan. Nothing could be more imperatively necessary. From several points of view, the continuing pressure of social budgets is now felt to be so great that,

unless ways and means are found to promote economy and efficiency in handling, a taxpayers' strike of major proportions is likely. Some indication of this possibility is the formation of the American Liberty League, which prominent Democrats have joined and which has for its avowed purpose the defense of property rights. Such an organization can of course turn out to be almost anything, from the nucleus of a Fascist-minded movement to a fountain-source of needed and valuable criticism. Perhaps—since its contour is reminiscent of the set-up given the now defunct Association against the Eighteenth Amendment—it will turn out to be primarily an aggregation of what older people would term "national liberals." A "national liberal" is pre-eminently a person who distrusts politicians and governments, preferring the unevenness of a relatively unregulated universe to the ein-zwei-drei of a bureaucratically supervised one.

AT ALL events, there can no longer be any doubt that the New Deal is badly in need of criticism, despite the eminent goodness of its chief social aims. Before taking office, President Roosevelt declared that the national aim must be to view the situation as a whole and to sponsor no improvement which would favor any one group at the expense of others. In order to accomplish this, the administration adopted the price-lifting theory, hook, line and sinker, and at the same time worked to conserve as much of the existing industrial structure as possible. But "controlled capitalism" as interpreted must necessarily be guided as to synthesis as much by theory as by facts. The government wanted great basic and manufacturing industries to employ a larger number of people for higher wages; and sooner or later it was found that such a program overlooked both the special situation of smaller plants in non-centralized areas and existing cost differentials between various producing areas. Again, while a valiant effort was made to conserve the foundations of credit upon which railroad bonds reposed—and with them a good deal of the stability of banks and endowments—theoretical considerations favored a war on the public utilities, in the securities of which, it so happens, the largest number of small investors had put their money. The consequence is again the formation of a group of disgruntled people who feel, no doubt quite legitimately, that they have been discriminated against. Certainly a complete list of the difficulties which have grown out of the administration of the New Deal would fill several closely written pages. And it is simply imperative that no blanket of rhetoric or of social philosophy be used to smother discussion of plain economic realities upon which the business improvement of the country, as distinguished from its moral bet-

terment, ultimately depends. We do not think that Mr. Roosevelt will permit himself to be frightened into imitation of the more autocratic moods of his predecessor, Mr. Woodrow Wilson. He is a man of astonishing political acumen, breadth of vision and openness of mind. There is no other political leadership in sight which could rival his for popularity or personal vigor.

ON AUGUST 26, the Hitlerites staged what may well have been the most grandiose of all their parties. Ehrenbreitenstein, rocky eminence which looks down upon the wedding of Rhine and Moselle as well as upon the biggest of all statues of the Emperor William I, seemed only a fitting pulpit for the Fuehrer as he addressed 600,000 faithful souls transported thither free of charge by the German railways. The purpose of the meeting was: impressing upon the folk of the Saar Basin the desirability of reunion with Germany. As is well known, the Treaty of Versailles "loaned" this territory to France for a period of years by way of compensation for the partly ruined coal mines of the region about Lille. A plebiscite, to be held in 1935, was to determine whether the inhabitants wished to go back to German rule, or whether they preferred French rule. Until recently there was no doubt that 99 percent of all *Saarlaender* were staunch Germans; but today a far different situation prevails. The Socialists and other Left-wingers in the region have induced the League of Nations to give them the right to vote for autonomous rule, subject to revision in favor of union with Germany at a later time. About one-fourth of the inhabitants have endorsed this move. The balance of power is held by the Catholics, a goodly percentage of whom have also elected to stand for autonomy on religious grounds.

THEREBY a perilous and interesting situation has been created. The Saar is preeminently a Catholic region. Should pastors and people in large numbers oppose Hitler, the triumph of the German cause on January 1 next might well mean a Catholic exodus of major proportions. What would happen to these exiles? One may add that the former leader of the Center party in the region, who has latterly become a Nazi, is a man who has several times publicly asserted that National Socialism is a far more promising and important "movement" than the Church, which last must therefore seek to "adjust" its doctrines to a new order. When even the supposedly orthodox among Nazis speak in this fashion, it is small wonder that priests and people should be deeply alarmed and made to regard Hitler as the emissary of the powers of evil. Yet under existing conditions resistance means preparation for some-

thing really akin to martyrdom. Catholics in the rest of the world must, therefore, be prepared—in case the Hitler propagandists bag a victory on the day of the plebiscite—for a really large-scale plea for help. Now is the time to make ready for such potential emergencies. Is it impolitic to suggest that no doctrine of the Catholic Church is more fundamental and unimpeachable than that which counsels giving to those in distress by reason of the Faith?

THAT the public will buy smut is of course a fact. Fortunes have been made on it, on the stage, the screen, the book-shelf and the news-stand. And yet the only honest opinion must be that this represents a minority taste, or a secondary or acquired or occasional taste. Abundant statistics, compiled over a period of many years, show overwhelmingly that the most basic trend of taste of that same public is for plays, books, films that are wholesome and clean. That these favorites often bear little relation to human reality or significant art does not touch the argument; especially as there is a good deal of evidence that popular favor is perfectly willing to embrace soundness and significance, along with wholesomeness—if it can get them. Against Harold Bell Wright, for instance, it is perfectly fair to cite Dickens, Mark Twain and the late Ring Lardner, all of them made by popular acclaim. This matter of the fundamental healthiness of public taste is currently brought to attention by the response of certain Hollywood producers to the Decency campaign. They have begun to compile their own lists of moral box-office successes as contrasted with the failure or near-failure of many expensively made films exploiting sex, morbidity and crime—and the lists are very telling, though not precisely in the way intended. Their purpose, of course, is to prove that Hollywood caters to the wholesome as well as to the sophisticated appetite. What they really prove is that the great run of people habitually prefer the decent. They crowd into the movies week after week, not to see sin glorified or marriage derided, but in the pathetic hope of being entertained.

MORE persons than one have found the current trend toward the nude inexpressibly strange. It is no longer merely a matter of bathing beaches, and the least possible resistance to sunlight. In the country, where tired city folk (business and otherwise) wander in and about woodland brooks, it is a maxim that the prettier the girl the more one sees of her. Sometimes one fancies that if Odysseus returned to find Nausikaa on the beach, he would be rather

astounded to find that she did not run for the clothes pile but instead handed him a cigarette with the utmost nonchalance. But there is another side to the matter, and one worth pondering. Goldsmith tells of an imaginary visitor from another planet who was invited to choose a lady from among all the world had to offer. And “the beauties of Circassia” made their entrance, “singing the most immodest airs, and leading up a dance in the most luxurious attitudes.” Their dress, apparently, was of the vintage of 1934. And the visitor “dismissed them as unworthy his regard, since they made themselves not the pursued, but the pursuing sex.” It may well be true that exposure to so many acres of human flesh, pink or burnt to a crisp as the case may be, is a prelude to disillusionment. Man has found relatively lasting delight in things done in patterns to which animals are insensitive. One need not be surprised, therefore, if the unending vision of undraped nymphs on every side produces more ascetics than the Victorian landscape, let us say, was able to grow. After all the beginning of virtue is a certain heroic disgust. And in order to be disgusted one would surely go not unto a nunnery but out to Coney Island.

A NEWS story from the suburbs reveals what extraordinary people live within the shadow of the metropolis. A man campaigning for quiet caused his butler to keep, “night and day,” a record of every canine noise emanating from the premises of a neighbor who insisted on harboring thirty or forty sheep dogs in the teeth of a court order cutting their number to three: of every noise, together with its duration and intensity. This record has just been presented as the basis of a demand that the dog-lover be held for contempt of court. What the butler thought about it all is not stated, though anyone can guess. However, the idea of a noise chart is not without its merits. If such a chart could be drawn up to visualize the horror of unnecessary sound which possesses this city, might that possibly lead to “something being done” in those vague quarters which now do nothing? The types of noise might be indicated in varying colors. The intolerable chorus by which stalled cross-town traffic invariably works off its nerves could best be suggested by a wide wash of poisonous red, split by jagged hooks like the knives in torture chambers. The worst noise of all—that rumble, heavy and harsh and inescapable, of antediluvian trolley wheels grinding their way over prehistoric tracks—should be transcribed by nothing else in the world but a livid band, narrow to begin with, but growing in breadth (as the car approaches you) till it seems to swallow up the shrinking vision.

SILVER

By GERHARD HIRSCHFELD

IF THE intricacy of economic formulas has been twisted around by a variety of groups and individuals to their own and usually limited advantage, it would seem that it has never been used more recklessly, never been handled more skilfully, never been applied more vigorously than by the silver advocates in this country. Gold may have been or still may be a cross on the bent back of mankind, but silver is lead on its feet.

Silver is a value; it is one of the none-too-precious metals. He who has plenty of silver, has a certain amount of wealth. It is a limited amount because most of it is manufactured into silverware; much of it is handed down from one generation to the other. It is probably true that the value of silver in the world of today is largely derived from sentiment, tradition or antiquity, and not so much from the fact that it is silver.

But it was different some two hundred years ago when paper money was something unknown to the people, who rather counted their earthly wealth in copper or silver or gold. The poor people preferred copper, the rich ones gold and the middle classes silver; hence the origin of silver as a currency medium. The United States had bimetallism, that is, a gold-silver standard, until 1873. Many other countries experimented on the same basis, none of them successfully. At present, not a single country is on the bimetallic standard, and only one important country is on a silver standard, namely China.

Why was silver abandoned as a "dead issue"?

The answer can be brief: it was not found possible to make the government or mint ratio of silver correspond with the open market price. For over forty years (from 1792 to 1834) one ounce of gold was freely coinable into the same number of dollars as fifteen ounces of silver; or a 15 to 1 ratio. But if people would offer one ounce of gold on the open market, they would buy with it about fifteen and one-half ounces of silver. In other words, one could take fifteen ounces of silver to the mint, exchange them into one ounce of gold, go back on the street and sell it for fifteen and one-half ounces of silver, making a net profit of the half ounce. It was an untenable situation and amounted to gold being good money, and silver bad money.

So, in 1834, Congress changed the ratio to 16 to 1. But the market price did not change. The effect became reversed; gold became the cheaper metal and drove silver out of circulation. In 1873, then, Congress got rid of the tiresome problem by simply omitting silver from the list of metals entitled to free coinage at the mint,

which for all practical purposes meant the single gold standard.

For its unhampered operation bimetallism would require the adjustment of the mint ratio on a sliding scale always to correspond with the changing price of the market. Furthermore, the leading nations of the world would have to agree on a uniform operation. And if it could be effected at all, such an international silver agreement probably could not be made lasting.

Disappointing as past experience may be, it does not deter the silverites. They have three chief arguments ready for presentation on the slightest provocation: First, the silver industry and its economic importance demand that something "be done" for silver. Second, the increased use of silver would strengthen commodity prices as well as purchasing power. Third, the silver countries, that is, India and China, would greatly benefit from a higher silver price.

As regards its economic importance, in the last year of the economic paradise, 1929, the total output of the silver industry was \$33,000,000, a rather small figure. All the mining industries contribute about 3 percent to the national income, and silver production is approximately six-tenths of 1 percent of the mining output.

The second argument of the silver protagonists is contradicted by last year's development. In May, Congress passed the Thomas amendment to the Farm Bill which authorized the President to purchase silver at his discretion, also to accept \$200,000,000 in silver as payment on the war debts. This was the first of a series of victories for the silver advocates. The next came two months later at the London World Economic Conference where an eight-power pact was negotiated to the effect that silver-holding countries, such as China, India and Spain, would limit sales from existing supplies while at the same time the silver-producing countries agreed to withhold from the markets fixed amounts of silver. This was to exert pressure on the price of silver. When, at the end of the year President Roosevelt ratified the agreement on behalf of the United States, he ordered the mints to buy all the silver mined in the country during the next four years at \$.645 an ounce, or \$.215 above the market price at the time when the order was published.

Silver stands today about 15 percent below its 1929 level when it was quoted at \$.53, as compared with the present market quotation of over \$.44. In contrast, the average level of commodity prices is more than 20 percent below the 1929 figure—which is equivalent to saying that with the

same amount of silver one can buy more today than in 1929. So it is true that silver has gone up in value, even more than commodity prices. But it is important to remember that the only reason why the price of silver climbed, was that something "had been done" for silver. It was simply the machinations of a powerful clique which, more recently, scored another point: President Roosevelt asked Congress to increase the use of silver with the ultimate objective of maintaining one-fourth of the value of the national money stocks in silver, to three-fourths in gold. Furthermore, he asked authority to buy domestic silver at not more than \$.50 an ounce, and proposed that nationalization of silver be permissive.

The impression conveyed is, apparently, that in this way silver is given its place in the national currency system at the ratio of one part of silver to three parts of gold. In reality, there is nothing of the kind because the President in his wisdom has ignored to establish a fixed relation between silver and gold values—which is a *conditio sine qua non* of a bimetallic standard. Besides, very little of our every-day transactions is being done in coin, and most of it in banknotes. The latter, however, are not convertible into coin in this country. Why, then, should it matter whether currency circulation is theoretically covered by silver to the extent of 25 percent, or not?

The rise of commodity prices, again, cannot in fairness be attributed to silver, just as it cannot be credited to gold. Price trends may be reflected in the price of gold, or of silver; they never can be influenced by either. Prices are subject to only one law, that of supply and demand which, in turn, recognizes but two masters: production of the supply, and consumption or use of the demand.

There is, then, the final argument of the silver advocates: a higher price of silver will greatly benefit those countries whose purchasing ability rests with their silver holdings. The countries referred to are China and India, whose people—numbering 800,000,000 out of a total world population of more than 2,000,000,000—if they own any wealth at all, own silver. If their buying power could be increased by the simple device of increasing the price of silver, the two largest markets on earth would be thrown open once more to international trade and commerce, and this alone could almost bring back world-wide prosperity. It sounds too wonderful to be true.

True enough, silver is the "money" of China as well as of India, even though the latter is on a gold standard. The reason is obvious: there are few banks in either country; there is hardly any credit machinery; people depend on coin in their daily transactions. Gold, of course, is too valuable for the broad masses of people to be hoarded, and too scarce. Silver is the better medium; it is cheap, it is plentiful, and it is handy

to do business with. China and India together absorb nearly three-fourths of the world's silver.

Is this, then, wealth? Not if they have to buy silver. If they were wealthy because they "handle" silver, so would be the bank clerk because he daily "handles" thousands of dollars. India and China are not in reality silver countries, because they do not naturally own silver. What they own, they have to buy. But they do not produce a single ounce themselves. Hence, if the price of silver rises, they will obtain a better quotation on present holdings; but when stocks get low and the Indians and the Chinese have to buy silver, the higher price will touch their own pocketbooks.

The simple fact of the matter is that, as neither China nor India produce silver, they have to pay for imports with exports. The negligible part of silver is illustrated in the fact that in spite of the considerable rise in the value of silver during the past year, Chinese imports dropped from 839,000,000 of gold units in 1932 to 697,000,000 in 1933, and during the first three months of 1934, imports amounted to 290,000,000 of yuan (about \$.35), as compared with 362,000,000 in the corresponding months of 1933. Hence it is clear that an advance in silver prices need not be followed at all by an increase in exports to China. What the Chinese will do, however, is to take advantage of a profitable silver price by exporting the metal. I have no recent figures on hand, but during the first nine months of 1932 United States silver imports from China amounted to less than \$600,000, and in the first nine months of 1933 to nearly \$18,000,000, or thirty times as much.

In the face of all these facts, it is hard to explain the power of the silverites in the United States, unless it be of a psychological nature. When Bryan conducted his silver campaign, perhaps it was as much directed *against* gold as it was *for* silver. It may be the popular idea in and around the Rocky Mountain States which house the silver producers, that the only thing which can remedy the ills and maldistribution of gold, is silver; that the most effective means of making the farmer prosper again, is to keep the mines running day and night. This may be why the cry of the producers that something "be done for silver" is taken up by a large section of the farming population which, on economic grounds, should not have the slightest interest in silver.

However, producers and their protagonists have succeeded in forcing an additional amount of silver into the Treasury coffers, and all that remains for us is the hope that it will lie there side by side with the more than 500,000,000 unwanted silver dollars of the Bland-Allison and Sherman Acts, without damaging the economic interests of the nation, but a proud monument to the skill and acumen of a small minority of the American mining industry and their senatorial brethren.

THE BATTLE FOR DECENCY

By JOSEPH H. McMAHON

NOW THAT the embattled hosts of the great religions of the country have grappled with the Frankenstein which is the colossal motion picture industry, it may not be inopportune to view the situation dispassionately in order to consider the pitfalls with which the attacking forces may meet. At the very outset the very standard unfurled by the Legion of Decency is challenged. What, then, is decency? By what standard is it to be gaged?

Obviously obscenity in art or literature is indecent. But again what is obscene in these two great fields of human endeavor? It is admittedly difficult to reach a definition if one is to consider the judgments given by many of our courts within the past few years. Most of those in the magistrates' courts of the greatest metropolis in our country would be amusing if the matter were not so important. But now that a superior federal court of presumably able jurists has sustained the contention that kindly palliated the scavenger stuff of "Ulysses" with the diaphanous drapery of "art," it has become exceedingly difficult to estimate what obscenity really is—at least in the eyes of the law. Under cover of this latest interpretation of the law all sorts of what the man in the street would call indecency may be portrayed on the screen, as well as in the printed page or picture.

The matter becomes more difficult when, leaving obscenity aside, differentiating it of course from what is merely vulgar, we approach the more delicate problem of what is or is not moral. A concrete example reveals that difficulty. In a recent issue of THE COMMONWEAL there appeared a striking review of a screen picture entitled "Of Human Bondage." It is fair to say that the reader of that review would consider the picture one that could be seen by any theatre-goer with no danger of meeting anything immoral. But *per contra* the bulletin published by the Chicago Council Legion of Decency, purporting to be "a moral estimate of Motion Pictures recently released," and proceeding to give a list of pictures which it divides into classes according "to their moral fitness," one finds "Of Human Bondage" relegated to Class C, which carries the startling dogmatic caption: "Pictures in this group are considered indecent and immoral and entirely unfit for Catholic patronage. (These pictures are

Despite all the comment on what the Legion of Decency stands for and is doing, one may doubt that the public has a clear understanding of the principles which underlie the movement. These Mgr. McMahon expounds in the following article, which is based on reliable knowledge of what the Bishops' Committee had in mind as well as on a great deal of practical experience with the theatre. We should like to add that there has long flourished in the Monsignor's parish an admirable devotion to amateur theatricals.—The Editors.

old but still showing in outlying theatres.)" The italics are mine and made with a view to pointing out that this verdict could be contested by reason of its contradictions: (a) if the pictures are old they surely have not "recently" been released; and (b) the title

"Of Human Bondage" in the list is followed by this parenthesis: (soon to be released). Evidently the judgment is hasty and perhaps the implication that the censor has witnessed a "preview" is not an actual fact. It would appear that while the book of that title could and should be reprobated, the picture does not follow the book if THE COMMONWEAL's review is to be approved. The example cited reveals one of the pitfalls that must be avoided in this struggle for the right.

The want of uniformity in passing judgment (instances could be multiplied) places the faithful in an embarrassing situation. To deprive them of the amusement, relaxation and pleasure offered by the motion picture by incontinently prohibiting any frequentation of the cinema is to test their loyalty to straining-point. Prudence would suggest seemingly that authoritative guidance should be offered: and authoritative guidance while a boon devoutly to be wished is very difficult of achievement. The general principles are clear; their application constitutes a problem. Perhaps enlightenment may come from a careful study of an important document.

In an instruction issued in 1927 to all the bishops of the Church the Congregation of the Holy Office made clear with regard to literature what these principles were. These words *mutatis mutandis* are equally applicable to the screen.

Among the saddest evils of our day, which are wholly subversive of Christian morality and doing immense harm to souls redeemed by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ, that class of literature above all must be stigmatized which caters to sensuality, awakens evil passions and creates a sort of lewd mysticism. It is question chiefly of romances, novels, dramas, comedies, in which our time is incredibly prolific, and which are daily more and more in evidence. If these literary productions respected modesty and decency, there would be only words of approval, but many writers paint obscenity in vivid colors and throwing off all rule and restraint, present pornographic recitals, now covertly, again crudely and cynically. With the most subtle details

they describe, to the point of leaving nothing intact in the order of morals, most degrading corruptions, covering them with all the charm and beauty of style. It is easily seen, then, how pernicious this is for young people especially, whose youthful ardor renders continence the more difficult. Worse than the authors of such romances there are writers who (an abominable detail) do not fear to nourish a morbid sensuality under the cover of sacred things, combining impure love with a semblance of piety toward God, and with a religious mysticism which is absolutely false. As if faith could be harmonized with such failure or, what is worse, denial of morality, and as if the virtue of religion was consistent with a corrupt life. *Let no one offer as an objection that many of these works should be praised for the value or the beauty of their style, for their psychological teachings, in conformity with modern discoveries, for their pretended reprobation of those shameful carnal pleasures, because they are set forth in their brutal and heartless reality, or are shown accompanied by tortures of conscience, or that clearly these evil pleasures most often end in affliction and remorse.* [Italics all mine.] For so great is the frailty of corrupted nature, so great its inclination to luxury [in the theological technical sense of lust], that *neither elegance of style, nor scientific notions of medicine or philosophy*, supposing they are to be found in these books, *nor the intention of the writer, whatever it may be, can ever prevent readers fascinated by the pleasure of unclean writing from becoming, little by little, perverted in mind*, and depraved in spirit, and giving free rein to their evil instincts, falling into all sorts of sins, and wearied of so shameful a life, often ending by suicide.

For the rest, it is not to be wondered at that a self-seeking world condemning God, regards complacently such productions and disseminates them with pleasure. But what is supremely deplorable is that authors who boast that they are Christians devote their talents to literature of so despicable a character. Many writers have reached such a degree of audacity and impudence that in their books they dwell largely upon those very vices that Saint Paul forbade to be so much as mentioned among Christians: "Let fornication and all impurity be not even named among you, as becometh saints" (Ephesians, v, 3). Let these authors know once for all that they cannot serve two masters, God and pleasure, religion and impurity. "He who is not with me is against me," says the Lord Jesus (Matthew, xii, 30). Now of a surety writers who by their infamous descriptions wreck good morals, which are at the true foundation of civil and domestic society, are not with Jesus Christ."

This, certainly is strong language and its meaning unmistakable. It cuts the ground from under the feet of those who wish the Christian artist or litterateur to portray life as it is, in all its reality. It answers the critic who presents the case most speciously:

I have believed—do still believe—that the Catholic novelist should represent life as it is. The devil is in evidence there, ugliness of all kinds has its place. Among the passions inherent in the Fall the weaknesses of the flesh are those which commonly determine most of the tragic events of life. Art cannot eliminate them, or conceal their misery, without being unfaithful to truth. Not that all should be expressed, the great rule for the Christian artist is to portray nothing which leaves in the soul the dominant impression of a seducing trouble, to restrain carnal episodes, to show their sorrowful consequences, to present sin as sin, shame as shame.

Upon the bishops of the universal Church the Sacred Congregation in that same instruction laid the obligation of combating the evil as set forth. They should especially enforce the prescriptions of the Index.

Now as admittedly the faithful, in this country particularly, have rather lax and often false ideas as to the morality of reading books which are condemned by those general prescriptions and even some of those specifically named (witness the conflicting opinions among Catholics about "the best sellers"), it is evidently the business of authority to cause them to be properly instructed not only as regards books but about what is now a more portentous evil, the pictured word. Catholic critics have also an obligation, in conscience to aid authority in the matter of determining what is moral and decent, in short, to be inspired by the wise rules laid down by the Roman Index. A French critic (Léon Jules, "Dict. Pratique des Con. Rel.," VI, 1082) thus sums up the requisites in a Catholic critic:

In order to be a good Catholic critic, it is clearly not enough to know how to appreciate the moral value and decency of a work of art. A Catholic critic should know the technique of the art and have formed his tastes by a long and loving study of its masterpieces. He should be familiar with the doctrines and the history of the art in question, should be thoroughly informed about it and should possess the accurate knowledge which would enable him to pronounce well-formed and equitable judgments. But above all such information and knowledge he should place in the first rank the teachings of theology, moral as well as dogmatic. Otherwise he fails in his essential duty, and while his criticism may be very brilliant and very keen, it will not be Catholic criticism.

What shall we say of the self-constituted critics and censors whose conflicting lists as noted above have already furnished the enemy with "a chink in the armor" of the Legion of Decency? How many among them possess the requisites to form a proper judgment demanded in the above declaration?

Happily the bishops have seen the danger and are preparing to meet it. In the altogether sane

and admirable paper of Archbishop McNicholas, "The Problem of Evil Motion Pictures," published in the *Ecclesiastical Review* (August, 1934, page 117) the difficulty is stated frankly and fairly:

The question most frequently asked is: What is to be done about lists of pictures? . . . Bishops, priests and laymen who have given much thought to this question are convinced that lists should not be published with the approval of either bishops or priests, for the simple reason that approbation would have to be given to them on the authority of others. It is a matter for the general conference of bishops meeting in Washington, November, 1934, to recommend whether or not lists are to be published.

In the interim it is to be hoped that unauthorized lists may not be forthcoming. The Archbishop touches upon another, and as I see it, a crucial difficulty—the disloyalty, conscious or unconscious, of many Catholics. He says:

Much is yet to be done through preaching *because many have false consciences or have lost a sense of delicacy of conscience* [italics mine], through years of experience in viewing immoral pictures. We must by our unceasing preaching make clear what is right and wrong in the cinema, *and our preaching must be confirmed by rigorous example.*

Monsignor Belford in a stimulating article "What Is Wrong with Our Schools" (*Homiletic and Pastoral Review*, August, 1934) offers what may be taken as a commentary on the Archbishop's delicately worded allusion to the distorted consciences of so many Catholics.

Private judgment is the soul of Protestantism. But it is not an entire stranger to our people. Too many of our convent school and college graduates make no secret of their belief that the morality of certain actions is a matter of personal opinion. They will not accept the judgment of anyone about attire and amusements, such as dancing and bathing, caresses and the like. Prominent alumnae not only practise what they call "birth control" but dare to teach it and advise it to brides in their circle. They insist that "private life is nobody's business," and they sacrilegiously refuse to make matter of confession out of glaring crimes. Ideas like these destroy morality. They blind those who sustain them.

The intelligentsia thus characterized by Monsignor Belford will form the most difficult body of Catholics that the Legion of Decency will meet, indeed has even now met. For there are numbers of such who have no hesitation in signing pledges but act entirely on their own judgment. The campaign will provide a test of loyalty and sincerity.

The Archbishop rightly foresees that the present stage of the crusade is temporary. The Church, aware of the enormous power of the cinema, must devise ways by which her people may be able to avail themselves with safety of its immense opportunities for education, artistic

enjoyment and recreational pleasure. That will be the real work of the Legion after this first stage of assault.

Happily, Catholic Europe has shown the way. American Catholics would be well advised to study carefully the measures taken by their European co-religionists to safeguard the morals of their people while permitting them adequately to use all the cinema offers in the way of culture and amusement. In an interesting contribution to the *Ecclesiastical Review* for July, 1934, Miss Hawks has shown what has already been accomplished to this end in Belgium, France, Holland, Germany, Austria, Poland.

Many will perhaps recall the spectacular performances of the Abbé Bethleem, a French ecclesiastical Carrie Nation. Seeking action and getting it, he acquired notoriety by attacking newspaper kiosks in Paris, seizing the vile pornographic magazines so much in evidence in them, ripping them to shreds and being arrested for sabotage. Cleared ultimately by the High Court, his work developed until now it is highly organized and no longer needs such spectacular action. It publishes and will give all possible information not only on books but on motion pictures. Its apparatus is simply amazing. And it always bears in mind that Catholics must not be confined to books, plays or pictures of the Sunday School type but encouraged to enjoy all that is beautiful without being unwholesome. Similar organizations exist, in Belgium particularly. As Belgium is a non-producing film country, Catholic Action has secured what seems to be a stranglehold on the selection and distributing department of the cinema industry.

To accomplish similar results must be the permanent effort of the Legion of Decency. Otherwise it will have failed to reap all the fruits of its first victory in the battle for decency.

Goldenrod

The summer smell is lately come unto me,
But what will all the smells of heaven do me
When goldenrod against another hill
Is struck to bloom and ominously still.
Only today I found the spotted lily
Drooped on the stem, three yellow heads hung down.
Only today I saw how green the sky,
Filled with sloe heat, leaned tremulous and high
Against the further margin of the town.
And now I see the goldenrod again
That but a winter past flung to the road
Small seeds for growing where autumn with his load
Of ripe red fruits trudged beautifully by.
While yet the spring is singing in the marsh,
While yet the summer strikes the sultry sod,
That vagabond with sassafras leaves for heart
Is telling death unto the goldenrod.

ELIZABETH JANE ASTLEY.

CANADA'S FOUR CENTURIES

By HENRY SOMERVILLE

IN JULY, 1534, Jacques Cartier landed in Canada and planted on the coast a cross thirty feet high, with the arms of the King of France, thus declaring his Christian purpose as an explorer while staking out a political claim. France did not retain that Canadian land which her intrepid sons were the first to discover, to colonize and Christianize. The French monarchy itself was doomed to fall. But the cross which French hands first raised in Canada has remained ever upstanding. Today, more than 40 percent of the population of Canada is Catholic. At the census in 1931 there were 4,285,388 Catholics in the dominion, of whom 2,849,096 were French-Canadian. The whole of Canada, and the French-Canadians particularly, celebrate joyfully this year the four hundredth anniversary of its discovery.

Jacques Cartier was the discoverer, but it is Samuel Champlain who ranks as the founder of New France. Champlain was the greatest of all the great colonizers in the seventeenth century, the age of colonization. He had declared his conviction, and always acted upon it, that the saving of a single soul was better worth while than the winning of the richest empire. Not less even than those first missionaries, among them the glorious Jesuit martyrs of North America, did the layman Champlain stamp on the infant French settlement in Quebec its indelibly Catholic character.

New France was both greater and less than the Canada of today in territorial extent. The west and the north were unknown, but French claims and French enterprise extended south from the St. Lawrence into what is now the United States. When the Cardinal Archbishop of Quebec was visiting New York last November, Cardinal Hayes graciously recalled the time when the State and City of New York were part of the Diocese of Quebec. In all the annals of Catholic evangelization there is nothing more thrilling than the story of what in the seventeenth century was called "the Canadian mission," meaning the Catholic evangelizing effort in all of that territory which was then considered New France. The lives and deaths of Fathers Brébeuf, Lalemant, Daniel, Chabanel and Garnier are well known. The Canadian mission was one manifestation of that tremendous movement of Catholic zeal called the Counter-Reformation. It was especially the work of the France of Richelieu or, rather, the France of Saint Francis de Sales and Saint Vincent de Paul and other champions of the Faith.

The light of the supernatural, even the miraculous, is seen in the Catholic founding of Canada. When Montreal, now the largest city in Canada,

was solemnly founded in 1642, the ceremony was entirely religious. Father Vimont, S.J., Superior General of the Canadian mission, preached and spoke the prophetic words: "What you see here, my brethren, is only the grain of mustard seed, but it will become a great tree." The commander of the settlement was the Sieur de Maisonneuve. At Quebec he had been advised that the distant island of Montreal was appallingly isolated and exposed to Indian attacks. "That may be," Maisonneuve had replied, "but . . . I was sent by the Society of Our Lady of Montreal to found a colony at Montreal, and I must do it if every tree turns into an Iroquois."

This Society had been formed in France by persons who knew nothing of Montreal except as a place on Champlain's maps. The impulse to form, first, the Society and later the actual settlement of Montreal, was due to a man named Dauversiere in the town of La Fleche, Brittany. Dauversiere held a small government post, was a married man with a family, and a shy and timid character. When, in 1631, he told his confessor that he believed he had heard a voice from heaven commanding him to found a hospital and congregation of nuns in La Fleche and a colony with a hospital at Montreal, his idea was discouraged. But, strangely enough, the La Fleche foundations were made through the instrumentality of Dauversiere. His confessor then began to encourage him in the Montreal project.

After eight years Dauversiere went to Paris to interview the personage who had received the grant of the land of Montreal. He wanted to form a society to buy the land, but first he had to persuade the proprietor to sell. Moreover, he had to get colonists out to Montreal and provide for its government and its defense against the Iroquois. He was successful because he visibly received supernatural aid. M. Olier, the founder of the Sulpicians, when approached by Dauversiere, though he had known nothing of him before, said: "You may count on me. I know what you want me to do." It was providential that such a heaven-sent leader as Maisonneuve came forward, willing to devote his fortune as well as his services to the enterprise. And on the very morning that the ship was due to sail from La Rochelle the party was joined by Jean Mance, a young woman who had long cherished a desire to serve God on the Canadian mission and who, without knowing anything of the Society of Montreal, had come, with convincing credentials, to ask advice of the Jesuit Fathers at La Rochelle. Jean Mance became head of the General Hospital

which still stands in Montreal. Her statue is one of the city's landmarks. The fulfilment of Dauversiere's vision was complete.

It was in consequence of a vision from Our Lady that Mother Mary of the Incarnation, the greatest of all the women who labored for the infant Church of Canada, left the Ursuline Convent at Tours and established an Ursuline community and school in Quebec as long ago as 1639. The rich widow, Madame de la Peltrie, who accompanied Mother Mary of the Incarnation and endowed schools and a hospital in Quebec, also acted in response to a supernatural message from our Divine Lord.

Sceptics may not believe the records of the supernatural; it matters little. They cannot deny the superhuman heroism and self-sacrifice of the religious men and women who came from France on the Canadian mission; they cannot deny that Catholics had a success which no other Christian body approached in evangelizing the Indians; they cannot deny the wonder of the 60,000 French-Canadians in Quebec in 1760 conquered by the Protestant English yet retaining their distinctive nationality as well as their religion, and by natural increase alone, without immigration, nay, despite emigration to the United States, reaching their present number of nearly 3,000,000.

The English-speaking Catholics of Canada though less anciently established and fewer in numbers than the French are not inferior in fidelity and zeal. It is chiefly the Catholics of English, Irish and Scottish descent in the Maritimes and Ontario who maintain the work of the Catholic Church Extension Society in the west and north. Toronto has its Institute of Medieval Studies, one of the most interesting enterprises for Catholic higher education on the American continent. Such renowned scholars as Etienne Gilson and Jacques Maritain are on its regular teaching staff. In the extreme east of Canada, eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton, works of Catholic Action have been achieved which are unique in North America. Under the leadership of the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, some 350 study clubs are now operating in two dioceses, and the study clubs have given rise to practical economic activities, especially in the form of co-operative undertakings among farmers and fishermen. There are cooperatives for canning and shipping lobsters, for the purchase of flour and feed and other supplies, and for the marketing of various agricultural products. Co-operative credit banks are the latest development.

In the West of Canada there is a unique example of English-speaking colonization achieved by Catholic Action. This is the Clandonald Colony in western Alberta started eight or nine

years ago with the nucleus of immigrants from the Hebrides. Since then there have been other English-speaking settlers, many from Ireland. The colony is entirely Catholic and there are now 200 families with 32,000 acres of land. An authoritative spokesman of the British government recently referred to it as the most successful example of group settlement seen in the British Empire for a hundred years.

I have mentioned in this article only some of the more distinctive aspects of the Catholicity of Canada. The vigor of the ordinary means of Catholic activity is sufficiently attested by the population being two-fifths Catholic though it has been under Protestant rule since 1763. The zeal of its colonizers and the blood of the martyrs has been seed bringing forth fruit a thousandfold.

THOUGHTS ON A SCHOOL

By CORTLANDT VAN WINKLE

SITUATED in Rhode Island overlooking the beautiful waters of Narragansett Bay, with Prudence Island in the distance, is a preparatory school for boys under the guidance of Benedictines belonging to the English Congregation. Though young and growing, it has already earned an enviable reputation scholastically among the long-established schools and universities of the East: several of the boys have already been elected to membership in the Cum Laude Society, and several graduates have earned scholastic recognition both at Harvard and Yale.

Last June I attended the graduation exercises at this school, and the first of these exercises gives me, as it were, my text.

Mass began the day. Entering the chapel, you see first of all the altar, beautiful in its simplicity, framed by tester and dossal. The Corpus on the suspended wooden cross is crowned with a king's crown of gold, and a tunic covers the body and much of the arms and legs. A frontal of rich and dignified design, with red altar-stoles falling below the frontlet, hangs before the altar itself, and a tent-like tabernacle veiled in white rests upon the center of the mensa. Here, I said to myself, is that rare combination of beauty and liturgical correctness, a splendid object-lesson to the youths gathered every day for worship.

The Mass was sung by the entire congregation of boys, who made up for the more delicate rendering of Gregorian rhythm by a certain insouciance in the loudness of their fervor and the lustiness of their voices; the monks, with a grave decorum sang the Proper. As if to accentuate the mystical union and the active cooperation between priest and laity in the Liturgy, one of the older boys, in cassock and austere white linen surplice, assisted the celebrant at the altar, turning the pages of the Missal and pointing out passages to be read or sung. Here, again, I said to myself, is Holy Mass offered in the manner prescribed by Pius X and his successors, an object-lesson to us all: priest and people united as one person in the public and official

worship of the Church, and so, mystically, one with the Victim Himself.

It is, after all, the Mass that matters. Many dubious words of late have been written with regard to Catholic schools and colleges, and their products. We are told that, compared to non-sectarian schools and universities, we Catholics do not impress the present age by the luster of scholarship and the art of biographer and novelist. Statistics are drawn up, based on the representation in "Who's Who" of Catholic celebrities, and this number on a pro rata basis is contrasted unfavorably with Unitarians or "Congreterians." We are asked, sometimes, embarrassing questions: How many illustrious scientists are there of the Catholic persuasion in America? Who are your physicists, your chemists, your biologists? What number of internationally known historians, or philosophers, or psychologists, or sociologists, or statesmen, does the Catholic Church in this country embrace? What American poets, or essayists, or novelists? Can you name a dozen? And yet is not the Catholic Church the largest of all denominations in America, and are not Catholic seats of learning spread throughout the length and breadth of this land? Our questioners are by no means confined to the stranger without our gates: Who has not read Father Cooper's strictures in the *Ecclesiastical Review*? Who has not been asked why it is that the reputation of the Catholic University or Notre Dame does not at least equal the reputation in scholarship and research and personnel of Harvard or Yale or Johns Hopkins?

But, as I turn in memory to the chapel of Portsmouth Priory School, I say again: it is the Mass that matters. This it is that marks the difference between the ideals of education held by the Catholic and the non-Catholic. To the non-Catholic, scholarship and all that this implies is the goal, the end, the be-all and end-all of intellectual life. To the average non-Catholic, the real world is the here and the now; his nebulous ideas of a future existence preclude any great degree of attention to what we Catholics call the eternal verities. His mental energies are directed largely in terms of the material; with the spiritual energies he reckons little. Hence his educational ideals are directed toward the solution of problems of immediate and temporal concern. If the only reality is the now, how vastly important are all the intellectual problems of this world! Why, if there is nothing but the world we live in, how supremely necessary is it to dig up every bit of fact and uncover every approach to a better understanding of the actualities of man's present environment! He would see through the glass less darkly, for after death he will see no more.

To the Catholic, on the other hand, education, such as the world understands the term, has a somewhat different significance. He does not for a moment deny that intellectual growth is, so to speak, *an end in itself*. He merely protests against the assumption that education is *the end in itself*. He recalls the Logos of St. John's Gospel and he venerates the Book of Wisdom, and he knows that the higher education transcends the intellect, as the spiritual transcends the material. He has, as a

matter of fact, little but praise for the splendid scientific investigations, alleviations of pain and suffering, restorations in health and physical welfare, expansions of intellect by the humanities and sciences. He would participate in all these; he would increase the fund of knowledge in every way. Yet he must ever recognize the truth: his chief business is to save his soul for eternity.

This world, so very and totally real to the non-Catholic, is, after all, but a fleeting shadow. The Catholic never loses sight of the fact that the primary business of school or college or university, just as it is the primary business of life itself, is not so much to grow in worldly knowledge as it is to grow in spiritual grace. While he does not consciously minimize the importance of scholarship, he nevertheless cannot help emphasizing the greater importance of a noble Catholic life, refreshed by faith, strengthened by prayer, and enriched by meditation and spiritual reading. He suspects that the high place given to worldly knowledge has upset the rational view of life as a whole. He is, at times, tempted to ask himself what difference, really, does it make that proof of research is furnished of Criseyde's eyebrows being knit together? Will this knowledge avail him on the last day? Is the discovery of Newton's laws, or Einstein's, comparable to the discovery of heaven? Or is the recognition of the unity of the animal kingdom comparable to the recognition of the unity of all Catholics in Christ through the mystery of the Eucharist? May a life of unswerving scholarship be compared with a life of unswerving devotion by an illiterate peasant to his God?

It is a matter of proportion. Catholic education is other-worldly; it is only secondarily concerned with the now—the now, as it is related to eternity. Therefore, sympathetic as we may be with those who would have Catholic scholars excel in all branches of learning; wistfully envious as we may be of the great reputations solidly erected by non-Catholic schools and universities; desirous as we may be that our representation on a pro rata basis be greater in "Who's Who" than all other denominations, yet, so long as Catholic schools and seats of higher learning turn out noble products of the spiritual life, we should rejoice and not complain.

A Catholic school which excels in scholarship, and which sends forth its boys better equipped than most to meet the demands of the great universities, is an institution deserving widest recognition; but I venture to say that the Catholic discipline fostered there, the piety inculcated, the spiritual enlightenment given by devoted religious, the corporate act of worship at Mass, are of far greater significance and of a value incommensurate. Those boys from Portsmouth Priory School, or boys from any other Catholic preparatory school, going up to Harvard or Yale or Princeton, are taking with them the priceless gift of faith and a solid foundation both in practice and knowledge. Far more important to these non-Catholic institutions than their contributions to scholarship or athletics or social activities is the leaven which they bring. By such as they, so we believe, in the process of time, shall the whole be leavened. What gift, comparable to this, can mere scholarship bring?

SEVEN DAYS' SURVEY

The Church.—The anniversary of the founding of the Society of Jesus by Saint Ignatius of Loyola, August 15, 1534, was observed privately within the Jesuit communities themselves this year. In 1940, the four hundredth anniversary of the approval of the Society by the Holy See, fitting celebrations throughout the world will call attention to the tremendous work which the Jesuits, who now number almost 25,000, have performed for the Church. * * * To spread the sense of missionary obligation incumbent upon every member of the Catholic Church, a huge Irish Missionary Exhibition, in which twenty-one Irish societies are taking part, is being held in the Dublin Mansion House, August 25 to September 16. * * * "The Family" and "Recovery" are topics to be discussed at the annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women to be held at Washington, D. C., September 30 to October 3. The Apostolic Delegate and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt are among those who will address the delegates. * * * An Italian institution, Pia Opera Jerusalem, established under the presidency of the Bishop of Assisi to arouse the interest of the Christian world in the Holy Places, is perfecting plans for an artistic talking film of Palestine, a souvenir of the Holy Year. * * * Two prominent scholastic philosophers, Father Sertillanges, O. P., of the Institut, and Étienne Gilson of the Collège de France, have recently been made Chevaliers of the Legion of Honor. * * * Assembled at Detroit for their national convention, the Knights of Columbus, who now number over 450,000, pledged themselves to support the Legion of Decency film campaign and to renew the fight for temperance. * * * As a result of its labors during the past eighteen years the Catholic Unity League of New York reports that 1,800 converts have come into the Church. * * * The Japanese artist, Takashi Shomatsu, a Buddhist who last year sent the Holy Father some exquisite Japanese art works, has recently sent His Holiness some precious manuscripts containing ancient Buddhist prayers.

The Nation.—The National Labor Relations Board was, when this went to press, very uncertain whether the textile strike involving directly about 500,000 workers could be avoided. The union demands met small response from employers, who were skeptical about the strength of the union organization. The cotton garment manufacturing industry was likewise tense after employers refused to obey President Roosevelt's order that hours be cut from forty hours to thirty-six with no cut in wages. * * * Reports indicated that 23 percent of the population of New York City are on relief rolls. In Chicago, 11.8 percent are on relief; in Philadelphia, 15.16; Minneapolis, 10; Pittsburgh, 16; San Francisco, 10; Cleveland, 16. New York's figure is the most disturbing in the country. * * * In California, Upton Sinclair, social democrat running on an "End Poverty in California" program, had a strong

lead in the race for the Democratic nomination for governor. Early returns showed him way ahead of George Creel, ardent exponent of the New Deal. * * * NRA announced a new set-up of code groupings. There will now be four basic groups: production of basic materials from the soil, fabrication into finished products, service and distribution. Under these classes twenty-two groups of industries will have definite place. It is hoped that administrative costs will be cut, that allied lines of business will receive equal treatment, that certain codes will be merged, and that a general rationalization will be encouraged. * * * The American Liberty League continued to receive much, and most varied, comment. After the original announcement of its formation made by Jouett Shouse, its members remained expectantly quiet. There was no indication that Democratic elected government officers in any part of the country welcomed it as an alternative to New Deal Democracy. * * * The American Bar Association, meeting in Chicago, reported that "the judicial branch of the federal government is being rapidly and seriously undermined. . . . Federal administrative agencies with legislative and executive powers are substituting a labyrinth in which the rights of individuals, while preserved in form, can easily be nullified in practise."

The Wide World.—Having climbed to the turret of a battle tank at Bologna, where maneuvers were in progress, Mussolini told Fascists: "We must become a military nation, even a militaristic nation, even—I might add—a warlike nation." While expecting no immediate outbreak of hostilities, Il Duce thought that the smell of gunpowder was in the air and that peace conferences were unreliable. * * * London bankers are reported to have been genuinely alarmed when, despite the use of the huge stabilization fund to sell francs heavily, the pound lost a good deal of ground against continental gold currencies. The movement was attributed to speculation that the dollar would go lower. * * * On August 24 a "trade agreement" was signed by the governments of Cuba and the United States. Duties on Cuban sugar and rum have been lowered; Cuba granted substantial tariff reductions on meat, flour, oil and certain other foodstuffs. A variety of other commodities and manufactured articles are also affected. * * * Dorothy Thompson, wife of Sinclair Lewis, had the good fortune to be the first American journalist expelled by the Hitler government. The order was based on uncomplimentary remarks made by Miss Thompson in an article written during 1931. F.P.A.'s comment was memorable: "Miss Dorothy Thompson, author of 'I Saw Hitler,' has been thrown out of Germany because, it is said, even with the aid of a microscope Hitler couldn't reciprocate." * * * Dr. Hjalmar Schacht, acting director of German industry and commerce, bitterly assailed foreign nations for their failure to purchase goods in his country. The situation necessitated, he said, not only

refusal to pay interest on bonds and loans but also curtailment of imports. On August 27 it was announced that after two weeks no further offers to purchase bond scrip would be made. * * * A Moscow congress of 500 Bolshevik writers urged efforts to make the people laugh. It was hinted that the two other parts of Wilkie Collins's famous advice had been unduly favored hitherto, despite the fact that "the working class is laughing."

* * * *

The Saar Plebiscite.—On August 26, Chancellor Hitler formally opened the final campaign to induce residents of the Saar Basin to vote for return to Germany when the plebiscite is conducted on January 13, 1935. A gigantic assembly welcomed to Ehrenbreitenstein, across the Rhine from Coblenz, 150,000 members of the "Deutsche Front" imported from Saarbruecken and its environs for the occasion. This organization is that into which previously existing bourgeois parties in the Basin were merged during 1933. During all the years since 1919, when the Versailles Treaty "loaned" the region to France by way of compensation for the damage done to coal fields in Flanders, there was never any doubt that 99 percent of the 800,000 inhabitants wished to live under German rule. Virtually every German government sought to induce the French to make an earlier settlement of the controversy than the one (a plebiscite in 1935) specified by the Treaty; and it is doubtless regrettable that this arrangement was not made. But now powerful opposition to reunion has manifested itself. A Left-wing alignment was able to secure from the League of Nations promises that a vote for autonomy, subject later to revision in favor of Germany, would be possible, and that special police forces would be recruited to supervise the region during coming months. Catholic autonomists have also been very active; and in view of the circumstance that the bulk of the population is loyal to the Church the Holy See has appointed a special envoy to the Saar Basin. No doubt economic considerations will play their part in determining the outcome, since any drastic move toward *autarkie* in the Reich would imperil the market for coal. It is predicted that the vote will be very close, and considerable thought is being given by agencies close to the League to possible safeguards for minorities in case Hitler should win out. One protective measure is, of course, automatically operative—no German troops are permitted west of the Rhine. Defeat would seriously impair the prestige of the Hitler government.

Voluntary Unemployment.—While the National Labor Relations Board started last minute negotiations to avert the national strike of textile workers which was scheduled to involve 1,000,000 workers within the week, the Federal Emergency Relief Administration restated its policy of providing for "families of striking wage earners, after careful investigation has shown that their resources are not sufficient to meet emergency needs." Federal Relief Administrator Hopkins pointed out that "relief organizations are not equipped nor should they be expected to determine the merits of a strike. Others are charged

with that responsibility, and in the absence of a ruling that a strike is unjustified it is the business and the duty of relief administrators to take care of families on the basis of need and not set themselves up as judges of the reasons for it." Thus far no strike has been officially judged by the Department of Labor to be "unreasonable and unjustified." The type of relief, whether direct or work, is up to the local administrator. Mr. Hopkins, however, evidently referring to the statement of Mr. Googe, a leader in the textile unions, implying that the unions were counting on federal aid to depleted war chests, added that "We are not underwriting any strikes." Individual and group cases will be handled on their merits.

Selected Statistics.—A controversy between Donald R. Richberg, counsel for NRA, and Henry P. Fletcher, chairman of the Republican National Committee, raged last week on the effects of the New Deal, during which the contestants studiously talked about different things. In a report sent to the President, Richberg cited "reliable figures" showing that 40,180,000 Americans were employed in June, 1934, an increase of 4,120,000 over March, 1933, and of 2,320,000 over June, 1933. He claimed that the 1,800,000 gain before the establishment of NRA and the A.A.A. was an anticipatory result of New Deal policies. He stated that labor's share of the national income was 58.3 percent in June, 1933, and 62.5 percent in June, 1934, and that the total purchasing power of manufacturing wage earners rose 25 percent in the same period. He noted that 2,000,000 more workers belonged to the American Federation of Labor and that trade associations had more than doubled. The index of manufacturers' production was 47.4 in March, 1933, 85.1 in July, 1933, and 72.1 in May, 1934; and the employment index was 56.2 in March, 1933, and 77.4 in June, 1934. These and other bullish statements Chairman Fletcher considered misleading. He attributed all rise from the depression between April and August, 1933, to the "American economic system" as distinguished from the New Deal system that began to function thereafter. He said the purchasing power of the farmer's dollar was 71 in 1933 and only 66 in July, 1934, and that in the last year industrial production, car loadings and private construction had declined in all departments except automobiles. He quoted the American Federation of Labor estimate that present unemployment is 300,000 greater than in October, 1933, and that per capita weekly earnings of workers has increased only 8.5 percent, while cost of living has gone up 9.6 percent. He protested that enormous strike losses were not considered, and in general claimed that "the bulk of the improvement noted in the Richberg report took place before July, 1933—before any of the so-called 'New Deal' emergency measures had been enacted and put in effect."

Contemporary Catholic Letters.—What are Catholics contributing at present to the various literatures of the world? A compendious reply is given in a German survey just published by Herder of Freiburg and entitled "Katholische Leistung in der Weltliteratur der Gegen-

wart." Here twenty distinguished essayists deal with the literature of almost as many countries, couching their remarks in fairly eulogistic terms but managing nevertheless to preserve balance and sanity. The literatures of Germany and France are the richest, offering works of great value in all the categories. No doubt the novel remains the form which even here has been least successfully cultivated, owing largely to the cleavage which necessarily exists between a naturalistic art-form and the transcendentalism of Catholic faith. Of especial interest and value is the penetrating survey of Spanish and Portuguese writings made by Mathilde Pomés; and something akin to a revelation is afforded by the papers on a variety of Balkan literatures, the very existence of which an American is hardly likely to expect. A section on Catholic authors in the United States is written by Agnes de la Gorce, of Paris—one of two or three cases where the critic selected is not a native. This paper is scintillant, the point of view is quite original, but there are some errors, doubtless unavoidable. A bibliography of forty pages is appended which, despite a number of spelling mistakes, ought to convince even the most recalcitrant that there is some Catholic reading-material in the world—reading-material not significant merely to a small and esoteric group but definitely a part of the major self-expression of the epoch. This book can be purchased from Herder and Company, St. Louis for \$2.50.

In Honor of Jacques Cartier.—When, four hundred years ago, Jacques Cartier landed at Gaspé, in what is now the province of Quebec, his first act was to take possession of the land for the King of France and for Christianity by planting a cross in the ground. The commemoration of this event, August 25, was a colorful spectacle witnessed by thousands. The French liner Champlain, with a delegation from the French government, steamed majestically into the beautiful Bay of Gaspé and was greeted by a fleet of 200 fishing smacks, their sails linked together with the coats of arms of Normandy and Brittany and certain legendary figures. The H.M.C.S. Saguenay, which had brought Premier Bennett of Canada to the festivities, welcomed the French with a salute of twenty-one guns. In the town of Gaspé Mr. Bennett unveiled a memorial cross hewn of stone from Cartier's birthplace, St. Malo, and conveyed a message to the Canadian people from King George. The next day, in the open air before the bay where Cartier landed, His Eminence Cardinal Verdier pontificated at a solemn high Mass to conclude the Gaspé ceremonies. Between 1534 and 1760, 10,000 Frenchmen came to Canada to settle; there are some 4,000,000 French Canadians in North America today. An editorial on the celebration in the London *Times* declares that "the history of the French Canadians under British domination is one of the most remarkable in imperial history." The society which they have built up is French from the point of view of race and traditions. They have remained themselves, but nevertheless they have fitted well into the Canadian picture. They are proud of their traditions, but they are also proud of being good Canadians.

Inflation or Deflation?—Secretary Morgenthau of the Treasury went on the air for the first time August 28, "to discuss with you the cost of the New Deal." During the fiscal year ending June 30, 1934, the public debt rose from \$21,000,000,000 to \$27,000,000,000. The assets of the government, however, went up in the following manner: cash on hand, up \$1,600,000,000; gold profits, \$2,800,000,000; increase of assets of such wholly owned corporations as the R.F.C. and the P.W.A., \$1,095,000,000; increase in the capital investment of the government in agencies which are partially financed by Treasury funds, \$766,000,000; other tangible assets in the form of better roads, housing dams, power plants, forests, etc. To what extent these are assets for budgetary purposes is debatable. Secretary Morgenthau expects to use the cash, gold profits, and government corporation assets to reduce, eventually, the public debt. From one point of view, therefore, the New Deal is in the red only \$505,000,000. The President's budget message contemplated the expenditure of \$6,000,000,000 from July, 1934, to July, this year and of \$2,000,000,000 from July 1934, to July, 1935. During the first six months, however, only \$3,000,000,000 were spent. This leaves \$5,000,000,000 to be disbursed before the end of the present fiscal year together with the additional \$525,000,000 appropriated for drought relief. "Whether we shall actually spend these [billions] will depend upon developments which cannot be foreseen at this time." The executive is thus controlling the expenditure of funds voted by Congress, most confident it will not go over the appropriated amount, and not at all sure it will go as far as Congress contemplated.

A Prayer for Peace.—Acting on the invitation of Monsignor Gerlier, Bishop of Tarbes and Lourdes, France, an International Pilgrimage of Former Combatants in the Great War is to gather at Lourdes, where the Blessed Virgin appeared to Saint Bernadette, to pray for peace. In an appeal, in the London *Universe*, to the British ex-service men, His Grace the Archbishop of Birmingham writes: "Statesmen have failed to bring a spirit of peace into our world; those who have fought in the war, ex-allies or ex-enemies, will now go together to the shrine of Our Lady to pray for the peace which we all desire so eagerly. The same sense of duty which made these men fight for their country inspires them now to join those for whom or against whom they were fighting during the war, in a great effort to secure by prayer the peace which we all hoped to obtain as the result of the war." The French Association of Former Priest-Combatants has taken the initiative in this pilgrimage, which is to be held September 22-24. Monsignor Gerlier's letter to the Archbishop of Birmingham disclosed the fact that the Holy Father has encouraged and blessed this pilgrimage and "assigned to it as its object the universal pacification of men's hearts as the best guarantee of international peace." In England an appeal for donations was sent out in order to enable as many disabled ex-service men as possible to go on the pilgrimage. Only former combatants and their sons will take part.

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COMMUNICATIONS

FICTION AND THE CATHOLIC READER

Boston, Mass.

TO the Editor: I have been greatly interested in the findings and reports of the recent Catholic Press Association meeting at Cleveland, Ohio, and especially in Mr. Baldus's plea for more fiction writers.

The position of the Catholic writer of fiction is, I think, unique in its difficulty. First of all, he is badly paid. Secondly, he is underpaid because the Catholic magazines are too poor to afford decent remuneration, and the magazines are poor because the reading public is not interested in their contents; a vicious circle! In my opinion, what we need today is not an increase in the number of fiction writers, but enough interest in clean fiction on the part of Catholics to make it possible for those we already have to produce their best work.

Now decent literature is, I take it, by no means the least important branch of Catholic Action, it is something that ought to be of the keenest interest both to clergy and laity, and surely we ought to look at the matter from the same practical viewpoint that we should use in making a success of any enterprise. It is extremely encouraging to see how many outstandingly good Catholic writers we have today, in all fields, and also to note the interest that is being shown by the secular publishers in Catholic books of all sorts, but even so the situation is miles from what it should be.

And here and now I puncture that large and imposing gas balloon which bears the legend that Catholics are too poor to give their writers proper financial support! We heard that cry of poverty long before the depression was even dreamed of—it has been far too long the excuse for all shortcomings! Even if we are really poor we are also numerous, and numbers can well nigh perform miracles; witness the old saying that it was the dimes of the Irish servant girls which built St. Patrick's Cathedral in New York City.

But there is another angle. If we could take a census at the door of any movie theatre, or other place of amusement, I think that we should find as many Catholics as Protestants among the audience. If we could check up on the purchasers of the lurid magazines that cover our book stalls, we should find the same condition. In fact, Catholics have money for the things they really want.

I admit that public taste has coarsened to a point where it is somewhat difficult to combine interest with decency, where the standard seems to be "who peppers the highest is surest to please"; but, in spite of this, there is to be noticed a distinct reaction on all sides in favor of better, cleaner fiction.

In my radio book reviews, over station WOR, lasting over a year and a half, I put on the air nearly four hundred books, every one of which I could recommend without reservation. Judging from the letters I received from libraries and private individuals, and the requests for lists of reading matter, there is a great and increasing appreciation of worth-while books.

It is a pity that we have not of our own a magazine devoted solely to the type of fiction which would appeal to Catholics, as well as to non-Catholics, because of its sterling quality. The nearest approach to this is a magazine published in the Middle West which carries a class of fiction that is of the strongest popular appeal. This, however, is combined with such an amount of missionary reports, and religious news, it becomes in effect a church magazine, its excellent fiction merely a side issue. If it were possible to have a magazine carrying that sort of fiction alone, it would have a general circulation and would, I am convinced, carry a real apostolate, and Mr. Baldus would have no reason to complain of the lack of good fiction writers.

It must not be overlooked that while there are some brilliant exceptions, the average writer who produces worth-while work requires quiet, time and peace of mind. A novel cannot be taken up at odd moments, like knitting, when one is too tired to do anything else. No painter or sculptor would be expected to produce a masterpiece in such a fashion.

The Catholic writer has to withstand the temptation of better, far better, remuneration, if he will produce a type of work catering to lower and more sensational tastes. Moreover, even when he keeps to his own ideals and standards, he is not taken seriously by his own people till he has secured acceptance by the secular magazines, or has had a book published by a secular publisher.

In the encouragement of the best within our own borders lies, did we but realize it, a harvest ready to be garnered, and a priceless opportunity for Catholic Action, by encouraging our own workers.

MONICA SELWIN-TAIT.

RICHARD HENEBRY

Brooklyn, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In your issue of July 27, Mr. W. P. Reeves make an inquiry concerning the late Dr. Richard Henebry's MSS. I did not see Dr. Healy's review in the April issue, but I can say that during my time as Gaelic editor of *An Gaodhal*, in this city, it was my good fortune to become intimately acquainted with Dr. Henebry, prior to the fall of 1901.

I know that Dr. Henebry had collected a goodly number of fine Irish MSS., from the families of persons whose forebears carried them from Ireland to this country, which he intended to edit for publication. Amongst these was a volume of Irish poetry from the pen of the renowned Irish scribe, Peter Paul O'Longan, which I donated him together with a few other MSS. of prose compositions. He was the best native Gaelic scholar this country has ever had the good fortune to know, and he did much in writing articles in Irish for *An Gaodhal* (The Gael). He also contributed a preface and notes and read the proofs of "The Revised Simple Lessons in Irish," prepared by Father O'Growney before his death and entrusted by him to me for publication. It is my opinion Dr. Henebry brought back to Ireland his collection here.

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Ecclesia

A History of the Church, by Philip Hughes. New York: Sheed and Ward. \$3.50.

MR. HUGHES'S trilogy promises to be of unusual value to American Catholics. His "introductory study" of the history of the Church begins with a first book, "The Church and the World in Which It Was Founded," and it is to continue with two more, "The Church and the World It Created" and "The Church and the Christian World's Revolt against It."

This study is of special value to us because we seem to be about to emerge from a period of isolation from the life of Catholicism. We are, as a rule, deeply ignorant of the history of the Church. As the mission country, which we only ceased to be well within my own lifetime and memory, we were in fact more close to Rome and closer to the Catholic culture and tradition of Europe than we are today. As a mission country a good part of the activities of the Church were concerned with recent immigrant groups, through clergy of their own race and language, all thoroughly part of whatever life Catholics led in the European communities from which they came. With induction of their children born in America into what seemed to be "American" life, two things happened: a deliberate discarding of European tradition, including much of Catholic traditional practise that it would have been very desirable to retain; and a growth of suspicion and even hostility to American life existing before the advent of new blocs, as something "Protestant" in essence and alien in race and culture to these new citizens.

More than any other agency, the Catholic University in Washington and its counterpoise, the American College in Rome, have served to restore the balance of this "new" Catholicism in America with Rome. We are beginning once more to realize ourselves as integrally part of the Roman communion and the historical development of the Church.

This history of the Church may strike some American readers rather forcibly with the similarity of our present-day conditions with "the world in which the Church was founded." Ferrero has long insisted that this similarity is almost overwhelming and that a study of the contemporary United States is essential to understanding of the Roman Empire.

Unfortunately our own schools do not produce Ferreros, nor Christopher Dawsons, nor Philip Hughes.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

First Aid in Shakespeare

A Companion to Shakespeare Studies; edited by Harley Granville-Barker and G. B. Harrison. New York: The Macmillan Company. \$3.00.

WE MUST read about Shakespeare in order to read Shakespeare. There is no way out of that. Very particularly we, absorbers in youth of more pipe-dreams about Elizabethan genius than have been wasted upon the stock market, need a good critical bath before we

proceed to "Hamlet" and "Henry IV." The value of the present book is, therefore, really above computation. It is a quiet, calm, usually well-written summary of the knowledge about Shakespearean scholarship which the average person with some brains about him will like to possess. Doubtless the individual specialist would leave a disapproving thumb-print here and there. Personally I stand with Dr. Tannenbaum and not with English authorities on Shakespeare autographs; others will not endorse such statements as that the Droeshout portrait is "of established authenticity." But what does all this matter? We have here a book written by first-rate people, for relatively popular consumption, in a frame of mind as remote as could be from eccentricities and balderdash. Of course there are some other usable "companions" to Shakespeare. But one ventures to predict that this will soon replace the rest in and out of the college classroom. It is really and truly an excellent thing.

Having said this much, we may briefly review the contents. There are five more or less general papers dealing with the life, dramatic art, theatre, poetry and vocabulary of Shakespeare. All are good, Mr. Granville-Barker's treatment of the dramatic art and Mr. G. D. Willcock's discussion of Elizabethan English being particularly noteworthy. A careful summary of Shakespearean relations with musical composition is presented with authority and charm by Mr. Edward J. Dent. Two bird's-eye views of the national and the social background follow, both written with well-nigh unimpeachable integrity. The rest of the chapters are relatively technical, being concerned with Shakespeare sources, with the structure of Elizabethan drama as a whole, with the text (a masterly general survey by Professor A. W. Pollard), with staging, and with the criticism and scholarship which have grown to huge dimensions with the passing of centuries. First-class reading lists are appended.

AMBROSE FARLEY.

An Amateur

My Life, by Lord Bemers. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. \$2.50.

THIS is a genuine contribution to English belles-lettres. The author is of the fine flower of old English stock and has led an untrammelled life all his days. Not only has he a talent for straightforward, easy writing, to which these leaves bear abundant testimony, but he has also produced certain melodies, including even so ambitious a production as an opera. These had, however, but limited performances in England, for Lord Bemers with all his *savoir faire* must be classed as an amateur in the divine art.

Among the general run of autobiographies, "My Life" seems almost inspired, its lines flowing as easily as the strains of "Sweet Afton," of which they are somehow reminiscent. It should be placed among the great English autobiographies, for I have rarely read a saner, better balanced book of its kind. It is recommended alike to the dilettante and the connoisseur of fine reading.

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Briefer Mention

Security Analysis, by Benjamin Graham and David L. Dodd. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company. \$5.00.

PROFESSORS GRAHAM AND DODD have written a sound and valuable book the purpose of which is to establish rules according to which investments can be studied with a maximum of confidence. Market analysis, so called, is repudiated in favor of security analysis, which means a study of values rather than of trends. The authors discuss bonds and stocks from every point of view, urging very strongly the difference between speculation and investment. Not a few old-fashioned shibboleths are attacked, for instance the notion that first-mortgage bonds are always better than debentures. While this is not a book for beginners, everyone who has had experience with investments and retained something to invest could hardly find a more reasonable and satisfactory guide.

Security Speculation, by John T. Flynn. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. \$3.00.

MR. FLYNN, who knows Wall Street as well as anybody, has written a treatise against unbridled speculation, the trend of which is, to his mind, disastrous to the financial honesty and thrift of the nation. Each conclusion is buttressed by analysis of concrete cases, made with genuine shrewdness and knowledge. Mr. Flynn holds that the existing regulation laws are not nearly strict enough. It is a book which everyone interested in the economic future of the United States ought to read. Few will agree with everything said, but all will find much useful and impressive information and (incidentally) make the acquaintance of a forceful personality.

An Atlas of Current Affairs, by J. F. Horrabin. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$1.50.

MR. HORRABIN, a British map expert, has surveyed the international situation and drawn little maps which bring the danger spots into relief. Short explanatory texts, most of them quite objective, supply the necessary information. The book is a valuable reference manual for those relatively acquainted with the problems and will also serve well as a beginner's book for those who wish to embark on the study of world political and economic questions.

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